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Tuesday, December20, 2016 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

HOLIDAY DRINKING SEASON

How to manage your hangovers. 13

Taron Egerton finally gets to 'Sing.' 10

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BOOK DEAL

Democratic National Committee pumps $750,000 into city's Right Books Campaign. 2

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1. What was the judge's ruling in a lawsuit aimed at stopping Philadelphia's soda tax?

2. Sixers' center Joel Embiid set a career high this weekend, scoring how many points in a win against the Nets?

3. What is the best way to cure a hangover?

3 things you need to know

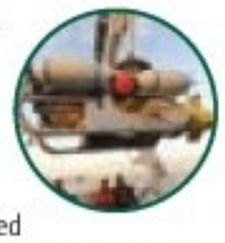
1 TRUCK PLOWS INTO CROWD AT BERLIN MARKET, NINE DEAD

A truck plowed into a crowded Christmas market in the German capital Berlin on Monday evening, killing nine people and injuring up to 50 others. German media, citing police at the scene, said first indications pointed to an attack on the market, situated at the foot of the ruined Kaiser Wilhelm memorial church, which was kept as a bombed-out ruin after World War II. The attack was claimed by Islamic State. The truck careered into the Berlin market at what would have been one of the most crowded times for the Christmas market, when adults and children would be gathering in the traditional cluster of wooden huts that sell food and Christmas goods. Berlin police said nine people were killed. REUTERS

2 NC SIGNALS REVERSAL ON TRANSGENDER BATHROOM LAW

North Carolina's governor-elect said a deal could soon bring the repeal of a state law limiting bathroom access for transgender people, following nine months of economic boycotts and protests over legislation protested as discriminatory. Under the law adopted in March, North Carolina was the first U.S. state to ban transgender people from using government-run restrooms that match their gender identity. The law, which catapulted the state to the forefront of U.S. culture wars over LGBTights, has been blamed for hundreds of millions of dollars in economic losses and the relocation of major sporting events. In a surprise development, incoming Gov. Roy Cooper, a Democrat, said on Monday that Republican legislative leaders agreed to call a special session as soon as Tuesday to repeal the law, known as House Bill (H.B.) 2. REUTERS

3 US SEES CHINA RETURNING DRONE AS EARLY AS TUESDAY



The United States expects China to soon return an underwater U.S. drone after a Chinese naval vessel seized it last week, with one U.S. official telling Reuters the exchange could happen as early as Tuesday at an agreed spot in the South China Sea. China's seizure of the unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) triggered a diplomatic protest and speculation about whether U.S. President-elect Donald Trump will point to the incident as proof of the need to take a tougher line with Beijing. A Chinese warship took the drone, which the Pentagon says uses unclassified, commercially available technology to collect oceanographic data, on Thursday about 50 nautical miles northwest of Subic Bay in the Philippines. REUTERS

Mayor Jim Kenney CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Philadelphia to intensify fight against childhood lead poisoning

The city's lead-poisoning rate for children is still twice the national average.

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Mayor Jim Kenney and other city officials vowed Monday to take new action to fight against lead poisoning of Philadelphia children.

Lead poisoning rates have plummeted in recent years, but in Philadelphia they remain twice as high as the national average. More than 300 children tested above the levels deemed safe for lead in their blood in 2015. Lead poisoning in children can cause developmental delays and other serious medical problems.

"We are determined to take the steps necessary to prevent lead paint from holding our children back," said Kenney, who announced the formation of a Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Advisory Group at a news conference in City Hall.

Officials said that city government has had a tough time fighting lead poisoning in children because of cuts in federal funding, low screening rates, and the difficulty of enforcing existing laws on rental units.

"Childhood lead poisoning today is a legacy from decades of disregard of health risks by paint companies and inaction by federal regulators," Health Department Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley said in a statement. "Nonetheless, this is a problem that has fallen to us to solve."

The Philadelphia Inquirer delved into the issue in an investigative series, "Toxic City," exposing an issue that some leaders called "worse than the situation in Flint, Michigan."

The Inquirer found that 2,700 Philly kids tested positive for harmful levels of lead in their blood in 2015. Out of those, 369 had blood lead levels above 10 micrograms per deciliter, according to the city. Another 1,477 children had blood lead levels between five and nine micrograms per deciliter.

ZIP codes 19132, 19140, and 19144 in North and Northwest Philly were found to have the most heavily concentrated results of high lead-blood level tests, according to a Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Plan released by the city.

Some landlords seem to be evading laws like those that require homes built before 1978 to be certified lead-safe or lead-free if rented to tenants with a child age 6 or under.

"City laws prohibit lead-based paint in homes that contains a health hazard to young children, but these laws have proven difficult to enforce for the many thousands of affected housing units," a news release from the city stated.

Furthermore, federal funding for remediation of lead hazards has decreased sharply in recent years. As a result, spending for lead poisoning prevention by the city's health department has fallen from $11 million in the 2007 fiscal year to just over $2 million this year.

One change the city is taking is to modify how the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) issues rental licenses to "implement the lead paint disclosure law more effectively and block continuing violators from obtaining license renewals," the city said.

City's additional steps to catch lead posioning early

- Encouraging consistent lead screening of children
- Increasing landlord compliance through education, reminder notices, violation notices, assessment and collection of fines and court actions
- Changing the City Code to strengthen enforcement

It remains to be seen how long these changes will take to implement.

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Philly schools to get $750K from DNC

The money will help finance the Right Books Campaign, which aims at putting more books in classrooms.

ALEXIS SACHDEV
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Signage for the Democratic National Convention is on view in downtown Philadelphia, July 21, 2016, in Philadelphia. GETTY IMAGES

The 2016 Democratic National Convention is long gone from Philadelphia, but the committee that organized the four-day political spectacle is now working magic on the city's schools.

Toward the aim of building libraries in elementary classrooms around the city, the DNC host committee will give $750,000 to the School District of Philadelphia's Right Books Campaign.

This six-figure windfall brings the district within $1 million of its goal to put $800,000 worth of books in classrooms, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported.

"We wanted to have a significant impact through the convention on the Philadelphia community," committee chairman and former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell told the Inquirer. "It's a bow on the entire convention process."

Rendell announced the gift Monday afternoon at Ludlow Elementary, with Mayor Jim Kenney and Superintendent William Hite.

The money, provided by corporate and private donors, was held in an escrow account but recently released.

Right Books has already received $6 million from the William Penn Foundation and $4.5 million from the Lenfest Foundation.

> *"We wanted to have a significant impact through the convention on the Philadelphia community."*
> Ed Rendell

Beyond putting books in classrooms, Right Books aims to give Philly students works of fiction and nonfiction that are on track with the students' reading levels. The campaign notes that giving students a book not matched to their reading level can discourage them; exposure to "right books" can boost their interest in learning.

"The right books, in the right hands, at the right time can change worlds. Together, we can make sure our students have it all," Hite said in a statement on the Right Books website.

BRIEF

Judge throws out lawsuit aimed at killing Philly soda tax

An early legal challenge to Philly's soda tax fizzled on Monday.

Mayor Jim Kenney's long-touted 1.5 cent-per-ounce tax on soda and other sweetened drinks will go into effect Jan. 1 as planned after a judge dismissed an anti-tax lawsuit filed by the American Beverage Association and several local business owners.

Common Pleas Court Judge Gary Glazer's decision dismissing the lawsuit was released Monday.

Philadelphia became the first major city in the nation to pass a tax on soda in June.

Kenney has pushed hard for the tax to help finance such programs as universal pre-K; the Rebuild program to restore parks, recreation centers, playgrounds and libraries; and community schools.

"Today is much more than a simple vindication of the legal principles on which the tax is based," Kenney said in a statement. "It is a victory for Philadelphians, who have waited far too long for investment in their education system and in their neighborhoods."

Opponents of the new tax filed suit in September, calling the tax "illegal" because it was not imposed statewide.

But City Solicitor Sozi Pedro Tulante said the judge firmly sided with the city's legal arguments.

"The judge upheld the key points of our argument: the Philadelphia Beverage Tax cannot be considered a sales tax, and neither does it violate the uniformity clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution," Tulante said in a statement.

Shanin Specter, an attorney handling the lawsuit to stop the tax, previously said that if unsuccessful in city court, he would appeal.

But Kenney urged them to drop their suit.

"I urge the soda industry to accept the judge's ruling and do the right thing for the children of Philadelphia, many of whom struggle in the chilling grip of pervasive poverty," he said. "The industry has chosen not to challenge beverage taxes in other municipalities and there is no reason to continue pursuing it here." SAM NEWHOUSE

This one approach is helping women overcome infertility

WRITTEN BY
Amy Smith

Having children isn't always an easy affair, a heartbreak millions of American couples face on a daily basis. And while modern medicine and fertility treatments have indeed changed the game, the truth is that there are too many people still struggling to grow their families.

The good news? There's another option out there that's literally helping couples finally conceive. "Medicine is a continually progressive science, and research helps keep the practitioners on the cutting edge of their fields while giving their patients the latest and best treatments available," says Dr. Ben Gocial, an infertility specialist at Main Line Fertility.

Clinical trials are what fuel life-changing medical advancements, including breakthroughs in infertility. Philadelphia-based Main Line Fertility is right at the forefront of research, helping struggling couples achieve healthy pregnancies. In other words, when traditional fertility treatments don't work, clinical trials can be an alternative path to parenthood because they explore new technologies. This means that participants can access novel treatment medications and protocols.

Studies range in style from phase one through four to observational. Translation: The drug being explored are not experimental and have already been found to be safe in previous studies. The ultimate goal of any fertility trial is to find the best medication dose with the maximum efficacy. Why? To up the chances of patients going home with a healthy baby. For many couples, clinical trials help turn their dreams of having a baby into reality. It can also significantly reduce the cost of fertility treatments that patients otherwise have to bear. "Fertility care has come a long way," adds Gocial. "Unfortunately, because of advanced technology, some treatments can be expensive. We at Main Line never want expenses to stand in the way of having a family, and we strive to reduce these costs."

Some clinical trial participants enjoy the perk of free or deeply discounted, treatments and/or medications. For example, not too long ago, Main Line participated in a clinical trial specifically for women who'd previously failed in vitro fertilization (IVF) at least three times. The experience resulted in couples undergoing an additional IVF cycle at no cost and producing success for some participants who otherwise would not have been financially able to try again.

"Main Line takes a personalized approach to caring for our patients, and nothing brings us more satisfaction then seeing patients realize their dreams of parenthood," says Gocial. Main Line's clinical trials aren't limited to infertility. General women's health studies that focus on things like polycystic ovarian disease

(PCO), endometriosis and fibroid treatments are also available. These opportunities represent yet another way that women may be able to receive treatment options that are both new and effective. Maintaining safety is obviously of the utmost importance. Study-related costs, like tests, time and travel, are also covered. This includes tests frequently needed for general care and medications.

Interested in participating in a Main Line Fertility study? They currently have multiple active clinical trials open to existing qualifying patients. Learn more by contacting Eileen B. Davis, Main Line's clinical research coordinator, at daviese@mainlinefertility.com.

To learn more visit
mainlinefertility.com
or call 215.398.1733

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BRIEF

2 die in fiery crash as car slams into school bus

A man and a woman died Sunday night after their vehicle hit a school bus and caught fire on Roosevelt Boulevard in Northeast Philadelphia.

Authorities said the driver of a 2000 Mercedes may have been speeding when he crashed into the rear of a school bus stopped at a red light near Woodward Street just before 9 p.m.

GOOGLE COMMONS

The Mercedes slid under the bus, and witnesses reported that the impact lifted the larger vehicle up and moved it forward.

Witnesses told police that onlookers ran to the car, attempting to help the two people inside, but the car caught fire. They also used fire extinguishers in an effort to get to the occupants, but failed to put out the fire, police said.

Police identified the victims as Ramon Rodriguez-Camacho, 32, and Lorraine Rivera, 38, both of East Tioga Street.

No children were inside the bus when the accident occurred, and the 41-year-old driver was not injured. The driver had dropped off children just moments earlier at a nearby church, NBC10 reported.

According to investigators, speed was a factor in the crash.

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Braving the cold at the 19th annual Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis, Maryland. GETTY IMAGES

Places to take the Polar Bear plunge in NY and NJ

These icy dips aren't for the faint of heart.

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If jumping into the ocean in the dead of winter wearing next to nothing sounds crazy, that's because it is.

Yet hundreds of people along the East Coast do just that every year.

The annual tradition is called the Polar Bear Plunge, and usually these brave souls do it to raise money for charities, mark the new year or chase the thrill.

If you're among those daredevils who'd rather splash in some icy water than snuggle next to the fire this winter, just make sure you follow the safety precautions.

Experts agree you shouldn't enter the frigid water intoxicated, nor should anyone who has high blood pressure or heart disease attempt the polar plunge.

Below is a list of officially sanctioned polar plunges in the New York/New Jersey region:

The Coney Island Polar Bear Club

The Coney Island Polar Bear Club hosts an annual plunge on New Year's Day, at 1 p.m. Suggested donation to Camp Sunshine — a Maine-based retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses — is $40, and participants can stop by the pub later for a pint. Get more information at **polarbearclub.org.**

Atlantic City Polar Bear Club

Maybe taking an icy dip is the answer to a hangover, provided you are sober enough and feel good enough. After the partying, find out in Atlantic City on New Year's Day. The AC plunge benefits the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America, and the plunge starts at noon at the Resorts Casino Hotel. Find out more at **atlanticcitypolarbearclub.com.**

Sons of Ireland Polar Bear Plunge

Kilts aren't required at the Sons of Ireland Polar Bear Plunge on New Year's Day in Asbury Park. Dash into the Atlantic at 1 p.m., and proceeds benefit local charities. Tickets start at $10. Get more information at **sonsofireland.org.**

Long Beach Polar Bear Club

Before melting into the couch on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 5, take a plunge with the Long Beach Polar Bear Club and raise funds for the Make-A-Wish Foundation at 1:30 p.m. Learn more and sign up at **longbeachpolarbears.org.**

LaCosta Lounge

Sea Isle City hosts its plunge on Feb. 18, at 2 p.m. LaCosta Lounge has a full lineup of bands and DJs all weekend long. Tickets are available for the entire weekend or for just the plunge. Get more information at **lacosta-seaisle.com.**

Plunge Seaside

Get freezin' for a reason in Seaside Heights. On Feb. 25, dip your toes for the Special Olympics of New Jersey. The more money you brave bears raise, the more swag — like blankets and sweatshirts — you get. Register online and get more information at **plungeseaside.org.**

Panel rules California judge in Stanford swimmer case not biased

The California judge who drew worldwide condemnation for giving a six-month sentence to a Stanford athlete convicted of sexual assault was not biased and acted in accordance with a probation report, the state's judicial oversight commission said Monday.

Brock Turner SANTA CLARA COUNTY OFFICE

The Commission on Judicial Performance received thousands of complaints against Judge Aaron Persky after his June 2016 sentence of former Stanford swimmer Brock Turner to six months in jail plus three years probation for assaulting an unconscious woman behind a dumpster outside a college party, the panel's chief counsel said.

Turner was convicted of three felony charges in the case — assault with intent to commit rape, sexual penetration of an intoxicated person with a foreign object (digital penetration) and sexual penetration of an unconscious person.

"There is not clear and convincing evidence of bias, abuse of authority, or other basis to conclude that Judge Persky engaged in judicial misconduct warranting discipline," commission director and chief counsel Victoria B. Henley wrote in the panel's report, released Monday.

Turner, 20 at the time of his sentencing, faced up to 14 years in prison for the three convictions. However, the penal code at that time allowed a defendant to be sentenced to probation. Prosecutors had sought six years in prison for Turner, but probation officials recommended a "moderate" county jail sentence followed by three years of probation and sex offender treatment, the report showed.

Persky's sentence followed that recommendation, the commission concluded.

In a detailed report that examined each of the major criticisms of Persky's sentence, the commission repeatedly cleared him of misconduct.

The complaints accused Persky of abusing his authority, displaying bias and imposing an unlawful sentence, the report said. The types of bias alleged included gender bias against the female victim, racial/socioeconomic bias because a non-white defendant would have received a harsher sentence and pro-Stanford bias stemming from the judge's own years as a student and athlete at the elite university near San Francisco.

Stanford law professor Michele Dauber, who has led opposition to the sentence and has begun a campaign to remove Persky from office, criticized the ruling. REUTERS

"We strongly disagree with the commission's conclusion on judicial bias and we believe that Judge Persky has in fact demonstrated a clear pattern of bias in cases of sex crimes and violence against women."
Dauber, in an email

BRIEF

Settlements reached in post-Katrina killings in New Orleans

Settlements have been reached in civil rights lawsuits brought against actions by New Orleans police officers following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Local TV station WDSU said the settlements were with the families of Ronald Madison, Raymond Robair and Henry Glover in three separate killings in the aftermath of the hurricane. The families have been in litigation for years with the city, it said.

Madison was fatally shot by police on the city's Danziger Bridge in September 2005. The 40-year-old with the mental development of a 6-year-old suffered seven gunshot wounds in his back, court records showed.

Five ex-New Orleans police officers pleaded guilty in April to various charges in connection with the killings on the bridge. Four other people were seriously injured in the incident.

Danziger Bridge GETTY IMAGES

The victims of the bridge incident, all black and unarmed, were trying to survive the hurricane's wake when a group of officers, believing they were racing to the scene of a police shootout, barreled toward them in a commandeered rental truck.

In the other incidents, Robair was beaten by police and later died, the TV station reported. Glover was fatally shot by a police officer, who was later acquitted of wrongdoing. Another officer was found guilty of setting his body on fire, it said. REUTERS

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Russian ambassador to Turkey shot dead in Ankara art gallery

The attacker was smartly dressed in black suit and tie and stood, alone, behind the ambassador as he made a speech at the art exhibition.

A gunman crying "Aleppo" and "revenge" shot Andrey Karlov while he was visiting an art exhibition in Ankara, Turkey, on Monday. GETTY IMAGES

The Russian ambassador to Turkey was shot in the back and killed as he gave a speech at an Ankara art gallery on Monday by an off-duty police officer who shouted "Don't forget Aleppo" and "Allahu Akbar" as he opened fire.

The Russian foreign ministry confirmed the death of envoy Andrei Karlov, calling it a "terrorist act." Relations between Moscow and Ankara have long been strained over the conflict in Syria, with the two support opposing sides in the war.

Russia is an ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and its airstrikes helped Syrian forces end rebel resistance last week in the northern city of Aleppo. Turkey, which seeks Assad's ouster, has been repairing ties with Moscow after shooting down a Russian warplane over Syria last year.

The Ankara mayor said on Twitter the gunman as a 22-year-old police officer. Two security sources told Reuters he was not on duty at the time.

"He took out his gun and shot the ambassador from behind. We saw him lying on the floor and then we ran out," said the witness, who asked not to be identified. People took refuge in adjoining rooms as the shooting continued.

A video showed the attacker shouting: "Don't forget Aleppo, don't forget Syria!" and "Allahu Akbar [God is Greatest]!" as screams rang out. He paced about and shouted as he held the gun in one hand and waved the other in the air.

A Reuters cameraman at the scene said gunfire rang out for some time after the attack. Turkey's Anadolu news agency said the gunman had been "neutralized," apparently killed.

Another photograph showed four people the ambassador lying on the floor.

"We regard this as a terrorist act," said Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. "Terrorism will not win and we will fight against it decisively."

It was not clear whether the gunman was a lone operator, driven perhaps by popular discontent over Russian action in Syria or affiliated to a group like Islamic State, which has carried out a string of bomb attacks in Turkey in the last year.

Since a failed coup in July, President Tayyip Erdogan has been purging the police of supporters of an exiled cleric and former ally, Fethullah Gulen, whom he characterizes as the chief terrorist threat to Turkey. REUTERS

BRIEF

UN chief fears genocide about to start in South Sudan

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Monday he feared genocide was about to start in South Sudan unless immediate action is taken, renewing his plea for the Security Council to impose an arms embargo on the world's newest country.

"If we fail to act, South Sudan will be on a trajectory towards mass atrocities," Ban told the 15-member Security Council. "The Security Council must take steps to stem the flow of arms to South Sudan."

Noting that his special adviser on the prevention of genocide, Adama Dieng, has described genocide as a process, Ban said: "I am afraid that process is about to begin unless immediate action is taken."

Political rivalry between South Sudan President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, and his former deputy Riek Machar, a Nuer, led to civil war in 2013 that has often followed ethnic lines. The pair signed a shaky peace deal last year, but fighting has continued. Machar fled in July and is now in South Africa. REUTERS

Camila Cabello leaves Fifth Harmony

You would think performing with a group of your peers might make the pressures of the fast-paced, competitive music industry easier to deal with. But apparently the opposite is true given that so many pop bands have a hard time sticking together. Last year, Zayn Malik left the hugely popular One Direction. And now their female counterparts, Fifth Harmony, are facing a similar plight. On Monday, the group announced that after four and a half years together, Camila Cabello has left the group. According to their statement, Camila's reps gave the notice. Does this mean there is some behind-the-scenes drama? Probably. At least Fourth Harmony has a similar ring to it.

Katie Holmes and Jamie Foxx do Cabo

Jamie Foxx and Katie Holmes might be the most elusive couple in Hollywood. We have a better chance of finding Kim Kardashian's robbers than we do getting a decent picture of them together. But we never stop watching and listening, hoping to get a scrap of info that confirms the relationship that blindsided us all.

We got lucky this weekend: US Weekly reports Foxx and Holmes took a private jet to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, to celebrate her 38th birthday Friday. They stayed in a remote suite at the Las Ventanas al Paraiso and even had a personal butler during their stay. Discretion was of paramount importance so the couple entered via a separate entrance. They returned to the States the following day and presumably got back to pretending not to know each other. Holmes did post pictures with her adorable younger doppelganger, Suri Cruise. But we know a distraction when we see one, Katie.

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Khloe Kardashian's boyfriend had a baby last week

Khloe Kardashian has kept things pretty low key with her new boyfriend, Tristan Thompson. And unlike other suitors who get caught up in the Kardashian web, there hasn't been a ton of press coverage about Thompson, his career (he plays for the Cleveland Cavaliers) or their relationship. All we know is that a pregnant girlfriend, Jordan Craig, was left in the dust when Khloe and Tristan made it official. Craig is the cousin of Kevin Hart's wife, Eniko Parrish. Small world. Anyway, US Weekly is now reporting that Craig quietly gave birth to a baby boy last week. While neither parent has shared pictures of their newborn son, Khloe posted a picture of her and bae. It's safe to say that she's unbothered by the new edition to Thompson's family. But then again, what's a little scandal to a Kardashian?

Mariah Carey doesn't know Ariana Grande or Demi Lovato

Mariah Carey is known to be a diva, a shady one at that. She completely transformed the meaning of the phrase: "I don't know her." After using it in reference to Jennifer Lopez years ago, it became MiMi's calling card. So when Andy Cohen invited Mariah to "Watch What Happens Live," they played a game of Do You Know Her? and there were some causalities. She still doesn't know J. Lo, and doesn't know Ariana Grande either. Cohen also asked Mariah about Demi Lovato's tweet over the summer where she accused Mariah of being "nasty" to J. Lo. She replied, "I don't know her either. So I wouldn't say anything to her. She should come up, introduce herself to me say 'Here's my opinion. What do you think about it?' That's how you handle s—." And just like that, Demi joined the rest of them in the land of the unknown.

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Taron Egerton loves him some Bowie

Taron Egerton voices a gorilla whose father is unhappy that he wants to be star crooner in "Sing," in theaters Wednesday. ILLUMINATION ENTERTAINMENT, UNIVERSAL PICTURES

The "Kingsman" actor talks about playing a crooning gorilla in "Sing."

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In his first leading role, in 2014's "Kingsman," Taron Egerton played a rough English hooligan-turned-suave and dashing spy. In this year's "Sing," an animated musical about a koala (Matthew McConaughey) who tries to save his failing theater by hosting a singing contest, the English actor, 27, plays a reluctant English hooligan (and gorilla) who dreams of becoming a singer instead of following in his crooked father's pawsteps. In 2017, Egerton will appear in the "Kingsman" sequel, which stars Julianne Moore as a villain, a turn that Egerton claims will leave all of us beguiled.

Your character in "Sing" performs a Zombies song. I was in a theater full of children, and I was easily the most excited for The Zombies. Are you a Zombies fan?
Oh, that's wonderful. And yeah, as much as anyone is. I mean, I don't own their stuff on vinyl or anything.

Did you have a say in what songs you got to sing?
No, no. I think the song choices were all pretty much set up before they even auditioned us. I didn't get any say in the songs I sang.

Well, if you could pick any song in the world to do, what song would you want?
Oh, man, I don't know. I love the songs I sing in the movie. They're all so wonderful. But I'm a huge David Bowie fan, so maybe something by Bowie would've been great. Maybe one of his more mainstream popular tracks, like "Heroes" or something. But the songs in "Sing" are all perfect, just great choices for the character.

Now that you mentioned Bowie I'm thinking about an animated animal singing David Bowie.
I think it would've been perfectly possible that we could've had a David Bowie song in there, and I would've loved to sing it. David's estate would've been — look at me, calling him "David" as if I knew him — but I think a lot of time was spent finding the perfect songs to go with the characters, and none of his songs fit.

There is "Under Pressure," which is kind of a Bowie song. I want there to be a Bowie and Iggy Pop duet in the sequel. That would be awesome.
Yeah, that'd be cool. I don't mind saying that I would love a "Sing 2." Who knows what'll happen in the future. This one needs to make money. We need to make this one a hit, man.

GETTY IMAGES

Looking to another "Kingsman"

You have the second "Kingsman" coming up, and you get to go face-to-face with Julianne Moore.
Yeah, just when you think we can't top the great villain from the first one [Samuel L. Jackson], we get someone like Julianne. She's so, so great in the movie. She's terr-i-fying. Such a sweet lady, and it was really, really great fun to spend time with her. I mean she's just [laughs] horrible in the film, in the best possible way.

We don't get to see her be truly wicked very often. Did you get to fight her? Not many people can say they got to have a fistfight with Julianne Moore.
I don't want to give it away, but she doesn't do much of her own fighting. She has people who do that for her.

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"THE JUNGLE BOOK" *NETFLIX INSTANT*

Neel Sethi, seen with the Bill Muray-voiced Baloo the Bear, is one of the only humans in Jon Favreau's remake of "The Jungle Book." DISNEY

Disney's new bag is remaking its animated classics as live-action romps. So far, so good, even if they've been a bit pointless; last year's "Cinderella" was perfectly fine if a little too close to the original, coming far short of a bold new vision. Jon Favreau's lavish redo of "The Jungle Book," meanwhile, has the perk of tackling a title that's not one of its best (even if it was the last feature Walt Disney oversaw before his death). Part of Favreau's job involves fixing some bugs in the original, smoothing out a source that's a bit too episodic. He's still perhaps not quite the visionary a movie of this scale requires, but maybe that's a good thing: His talents aren't in spectacle but in people, and even a movie with 95 percent critters has a lived-in, character-driven feel. What he's made isn't exactly essential, but it is charming.

'WHITE GIRL' *NETFLIX INSTANT*

Morgan Saylor (with Brian "Sene" Marc) in "White Girl" FILMRISE

Her name is Leah (played by Morgan Saylor), and she is indeed white (and privileged). She drops into slowly gentrifying Ridgewood, Queens, with a week before school starts, and doesn't waste time hoovering up drinks and drugs, letting her boss (Justin Bartha) do her on his desk and getting involved in local low-rent crime. Sounds like the sequel to "Kids," no? But Elizabeth Wood's semi-autobiographical drama is more observational than alarmist. Leah can always be counted on to make bad decisions, but you won't walk away simply worrying about the kids these days. It's more complex and more empathetic than the title lets on.

"ANOTHER WOMAN" *FILMSTRUCK*

Gena Rowlands in 1988's "Another Woman" MGM

In 1978, Woody Allen shocked the world: He made his first serious movie. "Annie Hall" was partly serious, at least compared to the silly comedies he'd made before. But "Interiors" was heavy. There were no jokes — just nods to Ingmar Bergman that weren't funny, as they were just three years earlier in "Love and Death." It's been fashionable to poo-poo Woody's occasional straight-faced dramas as rip-offs of more masterful filmmakers, which they partly were. But the four that just popped up on FilmStruck — under the banner "Serious Woody Allen" — are worthy of reconsideration. Of these (which also includes "Stardust Memories" and "September"), we're the most into "Another Woman," his 1988 drama about a professor (Gena Rowlands) whose stuffy NYC existence is shaken to the core. It contains some of his most lyrical and heartbreaking passages — and, thanks to Gene Hackman, even a joke or two.

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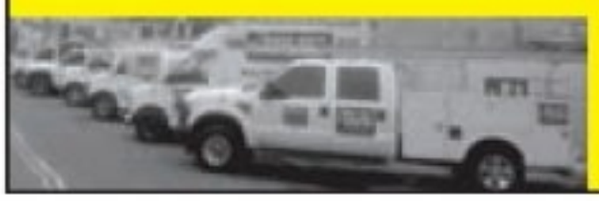

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Niko Lopez works his magic backstage at Fashion Week. GAVIN O'NEILL

Get holiday glam

Whether you're hitting up a swank New Year's Eve party or just hosting at home, we've got the right makeup look for you.

TINA CHADHA
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Everyone expects a bold red lip for holiday festivities. But this year, let's make eyes the focus.

"The holidays are a good excuse for people to wear shimmery eyeshadow and be a little more blinging," says Nars makeup stylist Niko Lopez, part of the backstage team that's created Fashion Week looks for designers Marc Jacobs, Alexander Wang, Rodarte and others. He tells us how to pull off the perfect party-ready sultry eye, and then to soften it for a casual soiree at home.

Tone things down for a party at home

If you're hosting a holiday party at your house and you don't want a full-on glam look, Lopez says to tweak the smoky-eye look to the right. Start by prepping the eyes with a little bit of primer or concealer. Line the top of the lash line with a lighter liner, like Nars Witching Hour.

"It's not a full-on black; it's an iridescent charcoal, so it's not intimidating for someone who doesn't wear a lot of makeup," he says. Next, smudge it and add a tiny bit to the lower lash line. Then curl the lashes and add mascara. "Keep it just at that, he says. "You have a little bit of that smoldered effect and focus on the eyes without having all the shadows and textures that look too done up."

With this look he says you can wear a red, berry or neutral lip.

Above: Nars Indes Galantes Duo Eyeshadow; for products, head to narscosmetics.com.

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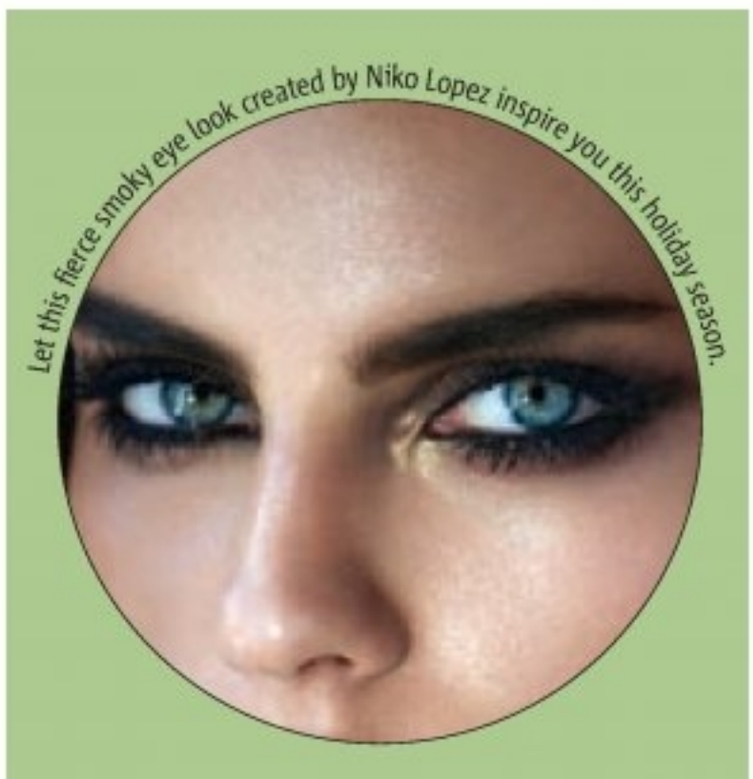

Wow them with a smoky eye

The key to a flawless smoky eye is to "blend, blend, blend," stresses Lopez. "I notice when people do a smoky eye it looks blunt on the arch of the eye around the crease." The expert shows us how to avoid this by taking us through his process.

1 Create a blank canvas. "Clear up uneven skintone on the eyelid by applying a little bit of a concealer with a creamy base to it, and set it with powder," says Lopez. But if you have oily lids, he says ditch the concealer for a primer like Nars Pro-Prime Smudge Proof Eyeshadow Base. "That's going to keep your eyeshadow on all day and ensure that it's not going to crease throughout the night."

2 Next, apply a soft neutral shade on the eyelids. Lopez recommends an ash brown with a little gold in it for a slight pop. "Sweep the shadow across the crease of the eye, blending with a fluffy brush," he says.

3 Now for the fun. Add a shimmery shadow across the lid from inner corner to outer corner, blending up to the crease, says Lopez. This season, the makeup artist is loving the charcoal shimmery gray shadow in the new Nars Sarah Moon Eyeshadow palette, Indes Galantes.

4 For a fierce look, Lopez applies a kohl liner (Nars Witching Hour) on the waterline (the inner rim of the eye), as well as on the top and bottom lash line. "Doing the waterline is what's really going to give you that smoldered look," he says, adding, "If someone wants a smoky eye, but not too intense, then I would leave the waterline out."

5 Finish up by curling the lashes and adding two or three coats of mascara.

6 To complete the look, says Lopez, apply a nude blush on the apples of the cheeks and pair with a nude lip.

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It's that time of year — holiday parties with open bars, long, wine-heavy dinners with family, raucous nights out on the town with friends. The common denominator? Booze, and lots of it. It's a time to let loose, but you don't want to waste your hard-earned vacation days worshipping the porcelain goddess (the first and last hangover-related euphemism in this article, promise).

We all wish we could drink to our heart's content without any consequences, but that's just not the way it works.

Dr. George F. Koob, the director of the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism breaks it down: "'There's no free ride in the brain. If something makes you feel good, it's going to make you feel lousy later when it wears off."

Koob's general advice is moderation, pacing yourself, knowing your limits.

Here are some practical tips to help prevent those difficult mornings after, and if you do slip up, to help you recover.

The night of

Hydration, hydration, hydration. Koob recommends water as a "drink spacer" in between cocktails — which will also help you with pacing. "By and large, the most overwhelming factor is how much alcohol you take over a short period of time," he says.

Be sure not to imbibe on an empty stomach, which can increase the rate of intoxication. Nutritionist Keri Gans, author of "The Small Change Diet," recommends starting off the night with a well-balanced meal of protein, healthy fat and fiber, which will help slow your body's absorption of alcohol.

The morning after

Sorry, but "the hair of the dog" will not help you.

"A hangover is basically a mini withdrawal syndrome," Koob explains. In the short term, that bloody mary at brunch might give you the illusion of feeling better — by getting you temporarily drunk again — but it will only make your hangover worse later in the day.

For a headache

Coffee can help relieve a headache; but know that caffeine, like alcohol, is also a diuretic. Make sure to match your cup of joe with ample water to prevent further dehydration, Gans advises.

To help replenish lost electrolytes while you hydrate, Gans names coconut water, Pedialyte and sports drinks, such as Gatorade. To reduce the headache, Dr. Shanna Levine, a primary-care physician at Mount Sinai Health Systems, suggests taking 400-600 milligrams of Ibuprofen or another nonsteroid anti-inflammatory medicine.

For nausea

Dr. Stephanie Zeszutek, an OB-GYN and professor at Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine, recommends freezing ice pops with low-acidic fruit juice (think, apple, carrot, or aloe vera, as opposed to high-citrus orange or grapefruit, which could trigger nausea) as a gentle way to take in fluids and electrolytes. Similarly, sipping a cool, refreshing smoothie made with banana (high in potassium), apple and yogurt won't shock your system

On the savory side, Gans recommends chicken soup, which goes down easy while replenishing sodium levels.

If you're feeling OK enough to venture into solid foods, keep it bland and simple. Gans recommends eggs (gentle on the stomach) with whole-grain toast (providing an energizing carb boost).

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Devils strength and conditioning coach Joe Lorincz (second from left) demonstrates his new workout regime. TOM ROARTY

New Jersey Devils workout fends off winter weight

Break a sweat; then enjoy holiday sweets.

NIKKI M. MASCALI
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One tester attempts the "sled march" portion of the strength circuit. TOM ROARTY

If getting fit is one of your New Year's resolutions or you're preparing to work off grandma's holiday cookies, the New Jersey Devils have created a workout bound to kick your butt into gear.

The 30-minute One Jersey Workout is a high-intensity regimen that combines strength and cardio training. It was developed by the hockey team's strength and conditioning coach, Joe Lorincz. He and assistant coach Jamie Rodriguez unveiled the plan inside the Devils' new fitness room at the Prudential Center in Newark earlier this week.

"It's designed for making people miserable," Rodriguez said half-jokingly before leading members of the media through the rigorous workout.

While testers were able to use the team's state-of-the-art equipment, many parts of the routine can easily be adapted to fit an individual's skill level and home gear if a trip to the gym isn't possible.

The workout starts with an eight-minute warmup that includes walking knee hugs, hamstring stretches, lunges and skipping. It's followed by a power circuit of box jumps and medicine-ball side throws and standing slams.

The final portion is a strength circuit that incorporates four rounds of split squats, pushups, sled marches, suitcase farmers — in which you carry a kettle bell in one hand as you would a suitcase — rowing and more. Just in case that wasn't enough for you.

The staff recommends doing the routine two to three times a week. The workout will be made available on the Devils' website and social media.

"It's never too late to start, and I enjoy this because it's kind of like a warm aerobic workout, and it keeps me from getting bored," Lorincz told us.

But is warm aerobics better than a warm, freshly baked holiday treat? Guess that's up to you!

Nerlens Noel has expressed his displeasure for his current situation in Philadelphia. GETTY IMAGES

Is this the end of the Noel era in Philadelphia?

The Sixers have made every indication they no longer want the services of the defensive-minded center.

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The Nerlens Noel era appears to have stalled. And it could be over soon.

Noel has been taken out of the 76ers rotation by head coach Brett Brown as Joel Embiid and Jahlil Okafor continue to start together.

Noel was the No. 6 overall pick in the 2013 draft and was later traded to the Sixers. After showing so much promise at times, the big man from Kentucky has been relegated to the bench. He missed the first 23 games this season after undergoing surgery on his left knee.

On Dec. 11, Noel made his debut at Detroit but suffered a sprained left ankle. Then came Friday night when he played just eight minutes in an 11-point loss to the Los Angeles Lakers.

Then he lashed out postgame.

"I just want to be on the court playing basketball," Noel said. "I don't really care who I'm playing with. I'm not an eight-minute player, so I don't know what that's about. So I don't care where, I don't, I don't, I don't really care. I need to be on the court playing basketball. I think I'm too good to be playing eight minutes. Nah, that's crazy. That's crazy. That's crazy. Need to figure this s— out."

Well, it has been figured out. Noel is out of the rotation.

"It's a challenge and I've been with him with four years," Brown said. "I personally have a soft spot for Nerlens Noel. We both have Boston connections. He's been with me. Nerlens' heart is in the right place. It's an unfortunate situation. I think people need to be reminded that he missed all of the preseason and only recently, 20 minutes before I even realized he was even available. I think we make a mistake when we talk about our three bigs because really it's four because we've got Richaun [Holmes] in that same mix."

Noel is on the verge of becoming a restricted free agent in July. The Sixers could have moved him after last season but decided to wait. The wait may soon be over as the trade deadline quickly approaches in February.

"I think this has been decided a long time ago," Noel said. "I think it [speaking out] had nothing to do with it. It's been something that's been set in stone. That's why I've been staying very content and just focused on bettering myself and worrying about the things I can control. You've just got to prepare yourself for things like these and take it one step at a time."

Embiid was absolutely sensational with a career-best 33 points to go along with 10 rebounds and three blocked shots in the Sixers' 108-107 win over the Brooklyn Nets Sunday night. Okafor struggled with his shooting (0-for-10), but grabbed 11 rebounds and played solid defense in the post.

Noel watched the whole game from the bench. Moving forward, Noel's future is very much a major question mark.

"A lot of people know it was going to get to a point like this," Noel said. "Now I'm the one that's in it. I'm going to deal with it the best way possible. That just means being a professional and getting better at every aspect that doesn't involve being on the court and being in the game."

Stay tuned. This developing situation is far from over.

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WHY I HAVE A LOVE-HATE WITH DOUG PEDERSON

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I've got this love-hate thing going with Doug Pederson. Every time I decide the Eagles rookie head coach is in over his head, he surprises me with guts and creativity. Conversely, every time I think he's got the mind for the job, he loses points with clumsy handling of players and situations.

Fourteen games in, I still can't say whether Coach Doug is the next Andy Reid or Rich Kotite. Judging from my Twitter feed, most Eagles fans lean toward the latter. A fair percentage want him fired ASAP. That won't — and shouldn't — happen.

But watching Sunday's 27-26 loss to Baltimore, I saw all the things I love about Pederson. And all the things I hate.

Let's start at the end. I love that the coach went for the two-pointer to win the game with four seconds left. Because, why not? The offense had momentum, the Birds had already converted a two-pointer, a close-and-late victory (finally) would build confidence in his young players. There was no playoff spot at risk so, sure, take a shot.

I hate the coach's play call there. All day long, Ryan Mathews had gashed Baltimore's league-leading run defense. But on this, the most critical play of the game, Mathews was on the bench. Pederson called a look-in pass, which the Ravens tipped away. What was the benefit of icing your own best weapon? Maybe Mathews was hurt, having not played the last five minutes of the game. But the coach insisted there was no injury. He just liked his chances better shelving the 220-pound battering ram. I hate that. "Situationally, we wanted to get all five of our receivers out on that play," he said Monday.

I love that Pederson discovered the run Sunday. As noted, Mathews was a beast, gaining 128 yards on 20 carries. Overall, the coach called 38 runs and 35 passes, the perfect balance on a rainy, windy day.

I hate that it took him 14 games to get there. Even with a tattered offensive line, the Eagles' four lead RBs have averaged an impressive 4.5 yards per carry this season. There's no reason Carson Wentz should heave the ball 45 times a game. A rookie QB deserves more protection. Pederson has that Andy Reid gene that, too often, totally sells out to the pass game.

I love that Pederson — while seeming milquetoast — has a gambler's heart. That final two-pointer Sunday seemed an obvious call. But beyond that, the coach has displayed no fear all season. Why ever punt from an opponent's side of the field?

I hate that Sunday's attempt to convert that fourth-quarter fourth down at the Baltimore 34 was a jet sweep to Nelson Agholor, who ignored a running lane and stepped out of bounds as a tackler approached. No player on the roster is more inapt for a clutch play. The coach needs to know that.

There's plenty more. In his first year, Pederson has shown an ability to both surprise and infuriate. No doubt he'll get a second chance in 2017. Here's hoping he's got a good learning curve.

Doug Pederson's success will forever be directly tied to that of Carson Wentz. GETTY IMAGES

Macnow's musings

Give huge credit to that makeshift offensive line — Jason Peters, Brandon Brooks, Jason Kelce, Stefen Wisniewski, Isaac Seumalo. They plowed the way to 169 rushing yards and allowed just one lone sack to Baltimore's formidable defense. While we're on the subject, what kind of reception does Lane Johnson get Thursday night when he steps on to the field for the first time in 10 weeks?

I am not looking forward to these two final home games against the Giants and Cowboys. With the Eagles out of the race, and those division opponents riding high, I anticipate a stadium full of No. 10 Manning jerseys this Thursday, and a hungover mob of idiot Cowboy fans on New Year's Day. Can we just fast-forward to 2017 already?

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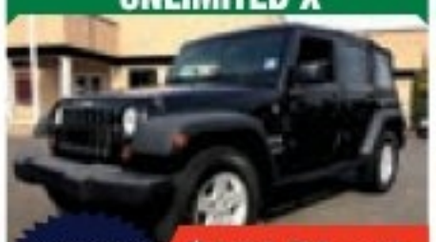
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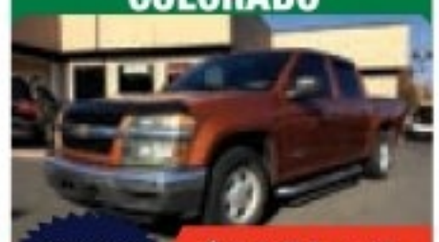
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16 Clump of hair
17 Crazy about
18 Trite
19 Ferber or Millay
20 Bow opposites
22 Grandeur
24 At present
25 Swamp critters
26 Paraphernalia
28 Marlins' city
32 "-- Up Little Susie"
35 Sloppy --
37 Crooner's tune
38 Clean water org.
39 Yawning
41 How -- things?
42 More pale
45 Harry Potter's pal
46 Weakness
47 Loggins or Rogers
48 Verne captain
50 Razzed
54 Bauxite giant
58 Fine-tuned
61 Cancan's -- Rouge
62 Name in fashion
63 Exploiting
65 Shape or form
66 Penny --
67 Talk out of
68 Anon's companion
69 Mare's nest
70 Social mores
71 Withered

Down

1 Top group (hyph.)
2 Kemo Sabe's pal
3 Marked a ballot
4 Attic function
5 Marbles
6 A Gershwin
7 Brainy club
8 Ill-chosen
9 Ma's forte
10 Piece of cutlery
11 Cartoon pig surname
12 Point -- -- return
13 Movie lead
21 PBS "Science Guy"
23 Ms. Bombeck
25 Hot rum drink
27 Cracked
29 Jai --
30 Antony or Chagall
31 -- fixe
32 Flimsy
33 Vaulted recess
34 Madeline of "Blazing Saddles"
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7	9		3	6				
			7			4		5
	1					6	7	
				1		8		7
	4	7		9		5	2	
3		1		5				
	8	3					6	
9		5			6			
				3	8		5	4

hard

			3					2
				6	7			9
5	9		8	4		1	6	
		2				4		3
	5						9	
9		1				6		
	1	9		3	8		2	4
8			1	2				
2					4			

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries You will come up against a roadblock if you try to take on too much or protest against someone who is in control. Focus on making positive personal changes.

Taurus Plan to do something nice for your peers. Your generosity and thoughtfulness will be appreciated. A unique gesture to help someone will bring you satisfaction.

Gemini Stick to what you know, and don't budge even if someone tries to talk you into taking part in something that isn't in your best interest. Avoid joint ventures.

Cancer Spending time at home with your family while getting things ready for end-of-year festivities will put you in a good mood. Share your thoughts and feelings.

Leo A change at home or in your workplace will turn out better than anticipated. Something you want to do for a loved one will result in an emotional reaction.

Virgo Stick to the facts when dealing with controversial matters. Your future may be at stake if you don't adhere to the rules. Industry parties are best handled diplomatically.

Libra Consider positive personal changes you can make. Knowing what you want to achieve next year will help you enjoy the festive season. A trip looks promising.

Scorpio Don't let your emotions take charge when dealing with older relatives. Do what you have to do and don't look back. Your intuition will help you make the right choice.

Sagittarius Find out what everyone else is up to before making a change that could affect others. Once you get the go-ahead, it will make your job and life easier.

Capricorn You'll intuitively know what's best for you and how to go about getting what you want. Don't hesitate when the going is good. Make your move and don't look back.

Aquarius You need to take care of incomplete financial matters. Making a donation to a charity or cause is fine, as long as you don't go into debt to help others.

Pisces Don't get too serious. Get into the spirit of the season and be grateful for what you have. Take a moment to reflect on what transpired this year. EUGENIA LAST

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